

DETAILED ACTION

1. Applicant's request for reconsideration of the finality of the rejection of the last Office action is persuasive and, therefore, the finality of that action is withdrawn.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Ian Lodovice on 12/17/2009.

The application has been amended as follows:

In the claims:

Claims 10-15 and 20-23 are canceled.

Allowable Subject Matter

3. Claims 2-9 and 16-19 are allowed.
4. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance: The reason for allowance is that it has not been previously shown in the prior art to utilize a silica sol that contains either sulfonic acid groups or mercapto groups in the papermaking process where the cellulose is still in suspension. The closest prior art (already of record) either utilizes a silica sol without the desired groups attached or uses a silica sol

with the desired groups for a noticeably different application (paper coating or polymer treatment), and it would not have been obvious to one of ordinary skill at the time of the invention to utilize the specified silica sol in the paper making process.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JACOB T. MINSKEY whose telephone number is (571)270-7003. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday 7:30-5:00 EST.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Steven Griffin can be reached on 571-272-1189. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

JTM

/Eric Hug/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1791